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ABSTRACT

This report is the first of a 2-part study aimed at assessing levels of information about and perceptions of vocational, technical, and adult education (VTAE) in Florida. Analysis of data collected during a statewide survey of 630 Florida residents in late March and early April 1971 revealed that perceptions of VTAE seem to be generally positive, but information about vocational education seems to be low as well as unrelated, in any systematic way, to images of VTAE. It was also found that some groups, namely older citizens and housewives, are reticent in regard to participation in VTAE program. When asked to define the term vocational education, persons of higher social status tended to respond in concrete terms, viewing vocational education as either specific skills, training, or education, while lower status persons tended to say that vocational education was "something good." Groups identified as potential users of public information programs included: (1) low income groups, (2) high school dropouts, (3) service and manual workers, (4) non-whites, (5) housewives, and (6) senior citizens. The type of information needed and method for channeling it to each of the target groups should be determined under controlled testing. The sample design and questionnaire are appended. (SB)

TERRY EDWARDS

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PERCEPTION AND INFORMATION:

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN FLORIDA

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Introduction

This report is the result of a statewide survey of Florida residents taken in late March and early April of 1971. It is the first part of a two part study aimed at assessing levels of information about and perceptions of Vocational, Technical, and Adult Education in Florida. The results are presented in the six chapters. The first presents an overview of how Florida residents responded to questions about VTAE. The second chapter examines the few differences which were found to exist between the five administrative areas which the Division of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education has created here in Florida. The third and fourth chapters examine perceptions of and information about VTAE in a rather detailed fashion. The fifth chapter takes a summary look at the interaction between perceptions and information. Finally, the sixth chapter presents conclusions and recommendations which were felt to be pertinent.

Since the entire report is rather extensive, we recommend that those who are interested only in a overview of the results pay particular attention to the first and last chapters. While we feel that each chapter is important in its own right, these two chapters will provide the reader with a reasonable overview of the entire project.

Finally, we would be remiss if we did not thank all of those whose efforts went into this project. It has been a monumental task and

certainly could not have been completed without the efforts of numerous people. But a special word of thanks must go to Dr. Carl W. Prohel, the Director of the Division of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education, and to the members of the National Council. Their willingness to find new approaches to decision making and resource allocation will most certainly improve the quality of life for us all.

CHAPTER I

THE PATTERN OF RESPONSE - AN OVERVIEW

In this chapter, discussion will be limited to a brief presentation of the overall results for the whole state. For each of the questions which were asked in the survey, we will present the frequency for response categories and make a few brief comments. More detailed analysis of selected variables will be reserved for later chapters of the report.

As we might expect, a majority of those interviewed had not taken part in an occupational training program. In fact, as can be seen from Table 1.1, only 20.6 percent of all respondents said that either they or

TABLE 1.1

Have you or any other member of your family ever taken part in an occupational training program

	(Percentages)
Yes	20.6
No	79.1
Don't Know	.3
Total	100.0
(N)	(898)

other members of their family had done so. We asked the 20 percent who indicated that they had participated in an occupational training program to describe the program. These results are shown in Table 1.2. Almost half of those who said that they had participated in a program (49.2 percent) could tell us only the field in which they had training. This included fields such as carpenters, plumbers, secretaries, data processing personnel and so forth. None of these individuals linked their training to VTAE or any other specifically identifiable programs.

TABLE 1.2

Kind of occupational training programs taken part in by respondents or members of their families

	(Percentages)
Junior College Program	5.8
VTAE Program Other Than Junior College	13.2
On-the-Job Training or Apprenticeship	9.0
Training in a Specific Field	49.2
Other Training	15.9
No Response	6.9
Total	100.0
(N)	(189)

About one out of five did, however, indicate that their training was through some kind of VTAE program. As can be seen, 5.8 percent of

these said that they either had or were currently participating in a Junior College program. The remaining 13.2 percent said that their training had been through some other phase of VTAE programs. Almost one out of ten respondents (9.0 percent) said that their training was through an on-the-job or apprenticeship program. The remaining 22.8 percent of the respondents who indicated that they had participated in an occupational training program gave us very little information as to the nature of their training. About 15.9 percent said only that they were trained and did not tell us under what kind of program the training took place. The remaining 6.9 percent gave no response at all.

After asking Florida residents whether they had actually participated in an occupational training program, we asked whether they had ever considered entering some kind of vocational education program. The results for the question are shown in Table 1.3. Clearly, as we might expect, a majority (74.1 percent) had not personally considered vocational education.

TABLE 1.3

Personally considered entering a vocational educational program

	(Percentages)
Yes	25.7
No	74.1
Don't Know	.2
Total	100.0
(N)	(898)

There may well be systematic differences among those who have and have not considered entering vocational education programs. We will leave the exploration of those possibilities until a later chapter of the report.

Respondents were asked to tell, in their own words, why they had or had not considered entering a vocational education program. Tables 1.4 and 1.5, respectively, give these results.

TABLE 1.4

Why respondents had considered entering a vocational education program

	(Percentages)
To Acquire or Improve Skills	35.3
To Improve Self	4.5
To Improve Job or Pay Opportunities	17.8
No Reason Other Than General Interest	4.5
Finish School or Get More Education	9.8
Other	23.6
No Response	4.5
Total	100.0
(N)	(224)

Slightly over one-third (35.3 percent) of the 25.7 percent who had considered vocational education said that their reason was to improve

existing or acquire new skills. About one out of five (17.8 percent) said that they had considered vocational education in order to improve job or pay conditions. Other categories mentioned were general improvement of one's self (4.5 percent), general interest (4.5 percent), and finishing school (9.8 percent).

Table 1.5, as we have said, shows the reasons which people gave for not having considered vocational education. Not unexpectedly, a

TABLE 1.5

Why respondents had not considered entering a vocational education program

	(Percentages)
Never Thought About It	3.2
Lack of Time or Money	4.9
Already Have Job or Skill	27.9
In or Went to College	10.5
Feel No Desire or Need	8.7
Housewife	10.8
Know of No Opportunities in the Area	2.3
Too Old	18.4
Other	8.3
No Response	5.0
Total	100.0
(N)	(673)

number of respondents (27.9 percent) simply said that they had a job or skill and, therefore, were uninterested in vocational education. This, in fact, is the single largest category of response. About one out of ten (10.5 percent) indicated that they were either currently in college or a college graduate and also felt no desire for vocational training. The remaining responses are somewhat more interesting.

Almost one out of every five respondents said that he felt he was too old to consider a vocational program. While this will be examined more closely at a later stage of this report, one or two comments seem pertinent here. Florida is widely known as a retirement state and the proportion of population over 65 years of age is growing. As this trend continues, it may become more and more important from both a social and economic viewpoint to ensure that senior citizens are clearly informed as to the varied opportunities which are available to them through vocational education programs. The results presented here seem to indicate that this may not currently be the case.

About one in ten (10 percent) of the respondents indicated that she was a housewife and as such had no time or interest in vocational education. Here again, it seems evident that, in our changing society, alternatives can be presented to women who wish to play the role of housewife while maintaining interests outside of that role. Both housewives and senior citizens are two groups of potential clients who should not be ignored when public information programs are developed. Finally, about one out of twenty respondents suggested that they lacked either

the time or the money to enroll in vocational education programs. As we will show later, the belief that vocational education is both time consuming and expensive may, especially among certain subgroups, be based upon misinformation. If so, it must be effectively destroyed through public information efforts.

The next set of questions deal with how people perceive vocational education. We attempted to assess feelings in two different ways. The first way was through what is generally called an "open ended" question. This is a question which allows the subject to respond freely and say whatever comes to his mind. The second technique was to assess how respondents felt about specific discussions of vocational education through the use of a series of questions with which they could simply agree, disagree, or indicate that they were undecided.

The open ended question asked, "Generally speaking, what comes to your mind when you think of vocational education?" The responses and the frequencies for each one are shown in Table 1.6. The most striking feature in the responses is the low frequency of any kind of negative reaction to vocational education. Indeed, only 3.1 percent of all respondents had negative remarks. Clearly, regardless of other conclusions about the image of vocational education in Florida, it can safely be said that there is certainly very little overt hostility.

TABLE 1.6

What comes to mind when you think of vocational education

(Percentages)

Specific Trades or Skills	16.9
Training or Education	26.4
Government Programs	3.3
Specific Vocational Schools	1.1
General Positive Reaction	16.5
General Negative Reaction	3.1
Vocational Education Takes Place of College	1.9
High School Programs	1.2
Private School Programs	2.8
General Reference to Work	4.8
Other	6.9
Nothing, No Response	15.0
Total	100.0
(N)	(898)

The most frequently given answer to the question was that vocational education brought to mind training or education. Generally, interviewees who made this response had little else to say on the matter even when the interviewer probed. Slightly over one-fourth (26.4 percent) of the respondents gave this answer.

About one out of six (16.9 percent) said that they thought of various trades such as plumbers, electricians, mechanics and so forth. About the same number (16.5 percent) simply gave a positive response. People who answered in this category made comments such as, "It's great," or "I think it's wonderful," or "We need more of it."

Vocational education was not associated, by large numbers of people, with government programs (3.34 percent), programs which take the place of high school (1.9 percent), high school programs, work in general (4.8 percent) or private schools (2.8 percent).

As we consider these responses, two points should not be overlooked. The first, which we have already discussed, is that vocational education seems to evoke responses from the public which are either positive or neutral. They most certainly are not negative. Second, responses to this question generally seemed to lack depth which might reflect a meaningful understanding of the nature of vocational education in Florida. Respondents seemed to know that vocational education had something to do with training, or specific skills or felt that it was good, but they were not able to go beyond these kind of simple responses. We will comment further on the extent of low information levels in a later chapter of this report.

The second part of our effort to assess perceptions of VTAE was a series of seven statements about vocational education to which respondents could agree, disagree, or say that they were undecided. The results for this group of questions are shown in Table 1.7.

Generally, responses were most favorable in regards to VTAE. Two-thirds of the sample (67.6 percent) agreed that more emphasis should be put on job training and technical education than on preparation for a university. About the same number (68.6 percent) felt that vocational education could be as useful as a college degree. An overwhelming 82.4 percent disagreed with the proposition that vocational education does not really improve chances for job success. An even higher percentage (92.2 percent) agreed that vocational education helps people get jobs with better pay and only slightly fewer (86.3 percent) did not see being middle aged as affecting one's decision to participate in vocational education.

There are, however, two very important exceptions to this otherwise extremely positive reaction to VTAE. First, many respondents felt that most people don't have the time to enroll in vocational education programs. While it is true that a majority (59.6 percent) disagreed with this statement, a significant minority either agreed (27.6 percent) or said that they were undecided (12.8 percent). Second, and perhaps more important, 40.3 percent of all respondents agreed with the proposition that most people don't have the money to enroll in vocational education programs. Moreover, 11.4 percent were undecided. Thus, only

TABLE 1.7

Perception of selected dimensions of VTAE

(Percentages)

	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Total	(N)
More emphasis on vocational education than on college.	67.6	14.7	17.7	100.0	(890)
People don't have time to enroll in vocational education.	27.6	12.8	59.6	100.0	(890)
People don't have the money to enroll in vocational education.	40.3	11.4	48.3	100.0	(897)
Vocational education can be as useful as a college degree.	68.6	15.0	16.4	100.0	(895)
Vocational education doesn't improve chances for job success.	8.4	9.2	82.4	100.0	(895)
Vocational education helps get jobs with better pay.	92.2	4.9	2.9	100.0	(893)
After middle age, vocational education is out of the question.	6.4	7.3	86.3	100.0	(892)

48.3 percent responded in a fashion which indicated a positive reaction to VTAE on this dimension. Indeed, this is the only item to which less than a majority responded favorably. The low level of positive response to both of these questions is greatly magnified when one recalls the sizable majorities which responded favorably to all other questions in this group.

These are areas which must be kept in mind during the development of public information programs. While other considerations may be important to those who think of entering vocational programs, it is clear that time and money are probably among the most important. Although we will subject these variables to closer analysis later in the report, it can be said here that they provide a starting point to increasing participation in VTAE programs.

Finally in this section, we asked respondents to choose the name which they liked best for job training programs. The results for this question are shown in Table 1.8. Slightly over one-third (35.2 percent) chose Career Education while 24.4 percent chose Vocational Education and 21.6 percent chose Occupational Education. About one out of five respondents (18.8 percent) were unable to answer the question. While Career Education gained more support than either of the other two possibilities, it seems clear that there is little consensus on this question.

TABLE 1.8

A name for job training programs
(Percentages)

Vocational Education	24.4
Occupational Education	21.6
Career Education	35.2
Don't Know	18.8
Total	100.0
(N)	(898)

The final series of eleven questions attempt to assess both levels of awareness and information about VTAE. These questions fall into three categories. The first deals with public awareness of various kinds of advertising efforts, the kind of media through which respondents recall having heard the advertising and what was recalled about the advertising itself. We have also gathered this same kind of information about the new program which is currently being advertised called Success. Second, we have attempted to understand the extent to which people know of vocational opportunities both in their home area and throughout the state. Finally, there are three items which reflect specific kinds of information about VTAE.

When asked whether they had seen or heard some kind of advertising relating to vocational education, a surprising 65.5 percent of the respondents indicated that they, indeed, had. At least to the extent

TABLE 1.9

Seen or heard advertising about vocational education

(Percentages)

Yes	65.5
No	30.4
Don't Know	4.1
Total	100.0
(N)	(898)

that people are able to recall having seen or heard advertising, existing public information programs seem to be having some impact. As will be pointed out below, however, this may be quite misleading.

The single most frequently mentioned source of information about vocational education, as shown in Table 1.10, was television. Almost 35 percent of the respondents reported that this was their prime source of information. The next most frequently mentioned source was newspapers with 22.8 percent indicating them as their primary source of information.

Radio and billboards were reported as a primary source of information by only a few of those interviewed (3.2 percent and .3 percent respectively). About one person out of five reported that this information came from a combination of sources.

As we have suggested above, respondents who had seen or heard advertising were asked to recall what was stressed in the advertising. It is important to remember that this question was asked only of those

TABLE 1.10

Sources of information about vocational education

(Percentages)

Television	34.8
Radio	3.2
Newspaper	22.8
Billboard	.3
Combination	19.9
Other	11.2
Don't Know	7.8
Total	100.0
(N)	(588)

who reported having seen or heard advertising. A rather dismaying, if not completely surprising result, is shown in Table 1.11. Of the 65.5 percent who reported having seen or heard advertising about vocational education, 55.3 percent reported that they could not recall anything at all that was stressed in the advertising. This finding overshadows any other results presented in the table.

A few simple calculations provide us with an even more disturbing result. That is, only 29.3 percent of the respondents who said that they had seen or heard advertising about vocational education were also able to recall anything at all about what was stressed in the advertising. Moreover, it must be noted that there is no real way, within the context

TABLE 1.11

Recall what was stressed in advertising

(Percentages)

Specific Trades	6.5
Specific Vocational Schools	10.1
Other Schools	1.1
Training or Education	6.5
Government Programs	3.8
Career or Personal Advancement	5.9
Other	10.8
Nothing, No Response	55.3
Total	100.0
(N)	(555)

of this study, to assess the accuracy of the recollections by the 29 percent. It is certainly not unreasonable to assume that a number of them incorrectly recalled the content of any advertising which they might have seen. When this kind of error is considered, it is clear that the number of respondents who had both seen advertising and could accurately recall its content is disturbingly low.

While we hesitate to draw any firm conclusions at this stage of analysis, it must be pointed out here that public information efforts which are channeled solely through the mass media appear to have some serious problems associated with them. While they seem to make a number

of people aware of vocational education, or at least that vocational education is being advertised, there are some real questions about the depth of information which is being transmitted. While we have no data to support this contention, we strongly suspect that a decision to enroll in a vocational education program is substantially different from a decision to vote for a political candidate or to buy a particular brand of soap. If for no other reason, this argument seems to have some face validity on the basis that a decision to participate in a vocational education program requires a commitment which commands more of an individual's resources than do the more ephemeral decisions to vote for a candidate or to purchase a certain brand of soap. It, therefore, seems clear to us that an image-making approach to public information does not meet the needs of VTAE. We will return to this question at a later stage of this report.

We next asked respondents whether they had ever heard of an organization called Sucess. We expected, of course, that affirmative answers to this question would be very low since advertising had only just begun when our survey work was completed. As Table 1.12 shows, our expectations were borne out. Only 9.6 percent of the respondents indicated that they had heard of Success. Of those, 76.8 percent either did not know where they had heard of Success or indicated that they had heard of it somewhere other than television. This, of course, was not possible. Moreover, of the 9.5 percent who said that they had heard of Success, only 1.8 percent could make any guess at all as to what it might be. It is safe to conclude that very few people have heard of the program.

Now, let us turn our attention to what people know about the opportunities for vocational education. Four questions were used to tap this area of information. The first two were, "Are there any opportunities for vocational education where you live?" and "How about Florida in general, would you say that there are very many opportunities for vocational education here?" The results are shown in Table 1.13.

TABLE 1.13

Opportunities for vocational education

(Percentages)

	Yes	No	Don't Know	Total	(N)
Opportunities Where You Live	51.4	28.0	20.6	100.0	(898)
Opportunities in Florida	48.9	20.0	31.1	100.0	(898)

As will readily be seen, there are a few differences between answers to these two questions. First, while a majority (51.4 percent) said that there were opportunities for vocational education in the area where they lived, slightly less than a majority (48.9 percent) said that there were opportunities in Florida generally. Further, a higher proportion answered "don't know" when queried about Florida (31.1 percent) than did so when queried about their home area. These results are not particularly surprising inasmuch as we might well expect people to be somewhat better informed about the area in which they live than other areas of the state.

The results shown in Table 1.14 provide us with somewhat more interesting results. Respondents who said that there were opportunities for vocational education were asked to name some of them, both for their

TABLE 1.14

Opportunities for vocational education

(Percentages)

	Home Area	Florida Generally
Named One Center	37.8	12.8
Named Two Centers	13.7	5.1
Named Three Centers	5.1	1.1
Named Four or More Centers	2.1	.6
Only Programs Mentioned or No Response	41.3	80.4
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(468)	(453)

home area and the state. We accepted only those answers which referenced specific facilities for vocational education. While this may be a somewhat stringent requirement, it is justified on the basis that it is relatively meaningless to know that there are opportunities to learn the skills of a mechanic without knowing where one might go in order to do so. We did, however, separately code those responses where names of skills which could be learned were given. They are also presented separately in the table.

A majority of those who said that there were opportunities for vocational education in the area where they lived were able to name at least one center where such opportunities were available. About four out of ten (41.3 percent), however, were unable to do so. Considering both the percentage who said that there were opportunities and the percentage who were able to name at least one opportunity, we find that only 30.2 percent of these respondents were able to do both.

The same pattern prevails when opportunities throughout the state are considered. The effect, however, is greatly magnified. Indeed, only 9.6 percent of the respondents who said that there were opportunities throughout the state were able to name at least one center where such opportunities might be available.

This leads us to the early conclusion that levels of specific information about vocational opportunities is abysmally low. It seems, in fact, that while about half of the population thinks that there are opportunities for vocational education, only a small proportion of that half can say what those opportunities might be. The other half of the population suffers from either a lack of information or misinformation.

Finally, we turn to three items which were designed to tap some specific bits of information about VTAE. In the first, we asked respondents whether they thought vocational education programs were for young people only, adults only, or both. As Table 1.15 shows, almost nine out of ten respondents correctly answered that vocational education programs were for both young people and adults.

TABLE 1.15

Vocational education for young, adults or both

(Percentages)

Young	7.4
Adults	.6
Both	89.8
Don't Know	2.3
Total	100.0
(N)	(898)

We also asked whether people in vocational education programs can go to college. The results for this question are contained in Table 1.16. While the trend is not as strong as on the previous

TABLE 1.16

Can vocational education students go to college

(Percentages)

Yes	75.1
No	4.8
Don't Know	20.1
Total	100.0
(N)	(898)

question, a clear majority (71.5 percent) indicated that, indeed, people in vocational education programs could go to college. It should be noted that many of those who did not give an affirmative answer simply indicated quite honestly that they did not know.

We finally asked residents if they had heard of any vocational youth organizations. As Table 1.17 shows, only slightly over four in

TABLE 1.17

Heard of vocational youth organizations

(Percentages)

Yes	42.1
No	46.8
Don't Know	11.1
Total	100.0
(N)	(898)

ten gave a positive answer. Moreover, as is shown in Table 1.18, when we asked what some of these organizations were, slightly over six out of ten either gave no response or gave no correct response. It appears then that little is known about vocational opportunities which are available to young people.

TABLE 1.18

Names of vocational youth organizations

(Percentages)

Named One Organization	31.7
Named Two Organizations	5.8
Named Three or More Organizations	1.6
No Correct Response or No Response	60.9
Total	100.0
(N)	(379)

Summary

Two rather clear patterns emerge as one reflects on this broad overview of the data. First, perceptions of VTAE seem to be generally positive. This is not without exception, however. It was found, for example, that on the two crucial programs, responses were not nearly so positive as on other dimensions. We have conjectured that this effect may be magnified among various subgroups of the population. Chapter III will consider this question in some detail. We have also noted that a number of respondents indicated that they thought that their age was a limiting factor in any decision to participate in vocational education programs. Likewise, many women suggested that their roles as housewives and mothers prohibited participation in vocational programs. We suggested that in both of these cases adequate awareness of the varied possibilities offered by VTAE may be lacking.

Second, information about vocational education seems to be rather low. That is perhaps an understatement. It seems that the more specific the information required, the lower the levels of public information. In this vein, we suggested that there is some serious question as to the role that the mass media can play when it is used in an image making fashion. Some innovative and persistent thinking and experimentation may well be needed to solve this problem. We will say more about levels of infonmation in the last chapter of the report.

In the next chapter, the data will be examined in order to determine what, if any, differences exist between each of the five administrative VTAE districts in Florida.

CHAPTER II

DISTRICT DIFFERENCES

This chapter examines differences which were observed across the five districts in which the survey was administered. As can be seen by the examination of the map on the following page, each of these districts corresponds to an administrative area created by the Division of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education. District I is comprised of the counties in Northwest Florida and the Panhandle. District II is in the Northeastern section. District III is made up of the counties in the Central East Coast region, extending across the center of the state to the West Coast. District IV includes those counties on the Southern West Coast commonly referred to as the Suncoast and several counties in the center of the state. Finally, District V includes the Southern tip of the state as well as a number of Southeastern coastal counties.

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STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL • TECHNICAL AND ADULT EDUCATION

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VTAE-Ld M-1
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Upon examination of the data gathered from each of the five districts, we were rather surprised to find that, by and large, patterns of responses in one district were much like those of any other district. Differences were found to exist on only six of the variables for which data was collected. As will be seen shortly, even these differences tend to be small and more often than not, meaningless.

The first difference occured when respondents were asked to tell us what came to their mind when they thought of vocational education. As can be seen in Table 2.1, there were three major response categories which account for over 70 percent of all answers in each district except District V. There, the figure is a slightly lower 67.5 percent. That is, about seven out of ten respondents either said that specific trades or skills, training or education or some positive response came to mind. All other responses account for only about three out of ten respondents.

There are some small differences between districts, however, which should be noted. Specific trades such as mechanics, plumbers, carpenters, and so forth were most frequently mentioned in conjunction with vocational education by those in District I (29.7 percent of District I respondents gave this answer).

District I was followed in order by District II (23.4 percent), District II (17.9 percent), District V (17.8 percent) and finally District III (13.3 percent). Training or education came to the minds of those in District V most frequently with 38.8 percent making this response. Districts II and III run close behind with 36.8 percent and

TABLE 2.1

What vocational education brings to mind
by
district

(Percentages)

District	Specific Trades	Training or Education	General Positive Reaction	All Other Responses	Total (N)
I	29.7	17.6	23.0	29.7	100.0 (74)
II	17.9	36.8	20.0	25.3	100.0 (95)
III	13.3	34.5	26.5	25.7	100.0 (113)
IV	23.4	22.5	24.3	29.8	100.0 (111)
V	17.8	38.8	10.9	32.5	100.0 (129)

34.5 percent respectively. Slightly more than 22 percent of the respondents in District IV made this response and only 17.6 percent of those in District I. Generally positive responses were made most frequently by those in District III with all other districts except V in the same range. In the fifth district only slightly over one out of every ten residents made a positive response.

As we have said, these differences are not large. Perhaps we can more succinctly summarize differences in the table by pointing out that when all responses but the three major ones under consideration are excluded, the modal tendency in District I was to think of

vocational edfcation in terms of specific trades. In District II, III, and V, the modal tendency was to think of VTAE in terms of training or education. Finally, in District IV, the tendency was to think of vocational education in terms of some kind of positive framework devoid of any specific substantive content.

Differences also occured when we asked respondents whether they had heard of Success. These were not wholly unexpected. Advertisements for Success were beginning to be aired over local television stations when we had completed approximately three quarters of our interviewing. Thus, since interviews were completed for each district before moving to the next (beginning with District I and ending with District V), we expected some respondents in Districts IV and V to have seen the advertising prior to having been interviewed. As Table 2.2 shows, this apparently did occur. Slightly over 12 percent in each of these two districts indicated that they had, indeed, heard of Success. However, this is probably a high estimate of the number of people who had actually heard of the program. District I shows 9.9 percent and District III shows 8.1 percent of the respondents indicating that they had seen or heard about Success. This seems, if not impossible, highly unlikely. Certainly in District I it was impossible for people to have heard of the program through any kind of public media advertisements. A good guess is that these individuals were either mistaken or, as sometimes occurs in survey research, simply told the interviewer what they thought

TABLE 2.2

Heard of Success
by
district

(Percentages)

District	Yes	No	Total (N)
I	9.9	90.1	100.0 (101)
II	1.6	98.4	100.0 (128)
III	8.1	91.9	100.0 (123)
IV	12.2	87.8	100.0 (123)
V	12.7	87.3	100.0 (134)

he wanted to hear. On this basis, it can probably be safely assumed that the percentage of respondents who actually had heard of Success in Districts IV and V was substantially less than ten.

The third variable on which some minor differences between districts occured was on the question of whether those who are enrolled in vocational education programs can go to college. The results for this question are shown, by district, in Table 2.3. As we have noted earlier, a majority of the respondents throughout the state correctly responded that vocational education students could go to college. Examination of Table 2.3 shows that this conclusion is also to be reached in each of the five districts. There are, however, some

TABLE 2.3

Can people in vocational education programs go to college
by
district

(Percentages)

District	Yes	No	Do Not Know	Total (N)
I	78.2	2.0	19.8	100.0 (101)
II	82.6	2.3	15.2	100.0 (132)
III	72.9	3.1	24.0	100.0 (129)
IV	75.0	3.1	21.9	100.0 (128)
V	71.4	9.3	19.3	100.0 (140)

variations. District III ranks highest on this question with 82.6 percent of the respondents giving an affirmative answer. District V ranks lowest with about 11 percent fewer respondents giving an affirmative answer. It should also be noted that District V shows the highest proportion of "no" responses. Thus, while many respondents in each of the other four districts said "don't know", about one out of ten in District V were simply misinformed on the question.

Differences were next found on the question of whether high schools and junior colleges should put more emphasis on job training than on preparation for a university. The findings for each district

are shown in Table 2.4. The highest level of support for more emphasis on vocational education was found in District III where 75.0 percent of

TABLE 2.4

More emphasis on vocational education
by
district

(Percentages)

District	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Total (N)
I	52.5	32.3	15.2	100.0 (99)
II	71.8	9.9	18.3	100.0 (131)
III	75.0	12.5	12.5	100.0 (128)
IV	66.9	18.1	15.0	100.0 (127)
V	68.3	8.6	23.0	100.0 (139)

the respondents agreed with the proposition. District III was followed rather closely by Districts II, V, and IV respectively. District I shows the lowest level of agreement with only 52.5 percent of the respondents doing so. About one out of three respondents in District I indicated that they were undecided on the question.

It should also be noted that although District V shows about two-thirds of all respondents indicating support for more emphasis on vocational education, this district also has the highest proportion

(over one out of every five) of the respondents who disagreed with the notion of more emphasis on vocational education. This suggests that there may be more polarization of opinions here than elsewhere in the state.

As is shown in Table 2.5, differences were found when we asked whether vocational education could be just as useful as a college degree.

TABLE 2.5

Vocational education can be just as useful to me or my children as a college degree by district

(Percentages)

District	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Total (N)
I	70.0	10.0	20.0	100.0 (100)
II	58.3	15.2	26.5	100.0 (132)
III	73.6	8.5	17.8	100.0 (129)
IV	70.9	15.0	14.1	100.0 (127)
V	68.6	20.0	11.4	100.0 (140)

On this question, all districts except the second were rather closely united in their agreement with the statement. In District II, over one out of four flatly disagreed with the statement and only 58.3 percent agreed.

Finally, we take passing note of reactions in each district when we asked respondents to select a name for various kinds of job training programs. The options provided were Vocational Education, Occupational Education and Career Education. Results are shown in Table 2.6.

TABLE 2.6

A name for VTAE programs
by
district

(Percentages)

District	Vocational Education	Occupational Education	Career Education	Do Not Know	Total (N)
I	24.7	15.5	39.2	20.6	100.0 (97)
II	24.6	23.1	30.0	22.3	100.0 (130)
III	18.1	30.7	33.9	17.3	100.0 (127)
IV	19.4	27.4	37.1	16.1	100.0 (124)
V	34.8	15.9	39.4	9.8	100.0 (132)

We noted in the previous section that there was no clear choice of the majority with respect to a name for these programs. The same holds true for each of the five districts. In District I, about two out of five selected Career Education, but one out of four selected Vocational Education and over one out of ten chose Occupational

Education. District II is even more closely divided with the largest category (Career Education) amounting to only three out of ten respondents. District III tended to go somewhat more heavily for either Occupational Career Education with less than one out of five selecting Vocational Education. District IV is very similar to District III with the exception that Career Education seems to be slightly more popular. Finally, District V shows the highest level of support for both Vocational and Career Education with Occupational Education getting only slightly more than one out of every ten respondents.

Clearly there is no overall choice of a name for vocational programs which is popular with the majority of people in each district. Indeed, the only thing that can be noted is that a plurality, however small, in each district chose Career Education.

CHAPTER III

PERCEPTION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

We noted in Chapter I that, with a few exceptions, VTAE enjoys a most positive image in Florida. In this chapter, we will explore what various groups of people think about vocational education in somewhat more detail. In particular, we will deal with five of the questions which were used to tap the kinds of feelings people have about VTAE. They are, in the order of discussion, (1) "Generally speaking, what comes to mind when you think of vocational education?", (2) "Why have (haven't) you considered entering a vocational education program?", (3) "High schools and junior colleges should put more emphasis on job training and technical education than on preparation for a university.", (4) "Most people don't have the time to enroll in vocational education programs.", and (5) "Most people don't have the money to enroll in vocational education programs."

In Chapter I other variables were included in this group of perception questions. They have been excluded from further analysis in this section for one or both of two reasons. First, variables were excluded for which there was a high degree of consensus among respondents about the answer. Thus, for example, "Vocational education helps people get jobs with better pay" was excluded because over 92 percent of the public agreed with it. In those cases, meaningful analysis of the differences between the kinds of people who are likely to agree or disagree

is not possible because of the small number disagreeing. Second, variables were excluded from analysis when they were not significantly related to independent variables.* That is, when knowing a person's sex or race, for example, was unable to help us better understand the response that he made, the variable was excluded from further analysis. The variables which have been included provide an excellent base through which a rather clear understanding should emerge about the nature of the kinds of people who have more or less positive images of vocational education.

What Vocational Education Brings to Mind

We will first examine how various groups of people responded when they were asked to tell, in their own words, what vocational education brought to mind. As in Section II, only the three major response categories are considered, the others providing too few cases for meaningful analysis.

Table 3.1 examines the differences between men and women. As can be seen, both sexes tended to answer this question in much the same fashion. Women were slightly more likely than men to say that either specific skills or training or education came to mind. Males, on the

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* Independent variables are variables such as sex, race, income, education, whether a person has taken part in vocational program and so forth.

other hand, were slightly more likely to make a positive comment than were women. Again, there were no truly significant patterns of difference between the responses of these two groups.

TABLE 3.1

What vocational education brings to mind
by
respondent's sex

(Percentages)

What Comes to Mind	Sex	
	Male	Female
Specific Skills	18.1	21.3
Training or Education	28.0	33.3
Positive Reaction	21.2	18.1
All Other Responses	32.7	27.3
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(321)	(441)

Next we consider response differences between racial groups. Table 3.2 shows that non-whites (9.1 percent) were significantly less likely than whites (21.1 percent) to define vocational education in terms of specific skills. They were, however, more likely to make some positive response. About 30.3 percent of the non-whites did so

while only 18.2 percent of the whites did. This somewhat greater tendency on the part of non-whites to make a positive response to this question must not, however, be taken to mean that non-whites are more favorably disposed to VTAE programs than are whites. We will show later in this report that non-whites are among the least informed about VTAE and, indeed, with regard to some specific dimensions of VTAE, are probably more negative than whites.

TABLE 3.2

What vocation or education brings to mind
by
race

(Percentages)

What Comes to Mind	Race	
	White	Non-White
Specific Skills	21.1	9.1
Training or Education	30.7	33.3
Positive Reaction	18.2	30.3
All Other Responses	30.0	27.3
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(691)	(66)

In distinction to sex and race, education seems to play a rather important role in the determination of how people are likely to define

vocational education, as is shown by Table 3.3. Of those with less than a high school education, almost four out of ten, (39.7 percent) made some positive response to vocational education while only one out of ten (10.0 percent) mentioned specific skills and just over two out of ten mentioned training or education (23.4 percent). Among the higher

TABLE 3.3

What vocational education brings to mind
by
education

(Percentages)

What Comes to Mind	Education		
	Less Than High School	High School Graduate	More Than High School
Specific Skills	10.0	24.2	22.9
Training or Education	23.4	34.4	33.7
Positive Reaction	39.7	11.5	12.1
All Other Responses	26.9	29.9	31.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(209)	(244)	(306)

education groups, however, the pattern is reversed. Fully 56.5 percent of those in the highest educational group thought of vocational education in terms of either specific skills or training or education. The same pattern is true of those who had completed high school.

The same general pattern holds when various income groups are considered. In the lowest income group over four out of ten made a positive response as is shown in Table 3.4. In all income groups over $6,000, over 50 percent of the respondents indicated that they thought either specific skills, training or education.

TABLE 3.4

What vocational education brings to mind
by
income

(Percentages)

What Comes to Mind	Income				
	Less Than $3,000	$3,000 6,000	$6,001 10,000	$10,001 15,000	Over $15,000
Specific Skills	14.1	19.9	13.3	30.9	23.9
Training or Education	19.2	27.2	42.8	30.2	23.9
Positive Reaction	41.0	21.9	20.6	12.3	11.0
All Other Responses	25.7	31.0	23.3	26.6	41.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(78)	(151)	(180)	(162)	(109)

Thus, the overall pattern of response seems to indicate that middle and upper status groups tend to define vocational education in fairly specific terms. For these groups, vocational education brought to mind

skills or trades such as electricians, carpenters, mechanics and so on. Also, among many of this group VTAE was seen as a kind of training program or as a form of education. Lower status groups, however, showed a marked tendency to define vocational education as some kind of "good" program. They mat not have been sure of the kind of programs offered through VTAE but they did say, in an overall sense, that the programs were good. As we have mentioned earlier, positive evaluation of VTAE is not without exception. This is more particularly true of those groups of lower social status. Thus, the positive responses here must not be taken as a blanket positive image of VTAE by lower social status groups. We shall return to this point shortly.

Why Not Enroll in a VTAE Program

We turn next to a consideration of the reasons which Florida residents gave for never having considered entering a vocational education program. Table 3.5 shows responses to this question controlling for the sex of the respondent. By and large, there are few differences between the responses of men and women. As we might expect, more men said they either had a job or skill or were in or had been to college (49.8 percent) than did women (34.2 percent). For both men and women, however, these were the single most frequently given reasons for not considering a VTAE program.

TABLE 3.5

Why not consider vocational education
by
sex

(Percentages)

Reason for Not Considering Vocational Education	Sex	
	Male	Female
Never Thought About It	2.3	3.9
Lack of Time or Money	5.8	4.7
Have Job or Skill	35.1	25.5
In or Went to College	14.7	8.7
No Desire	11.6	7.4
Housewife	0.0	19.2
Know of No Opportunities	3.5	1.6
Too Old	20.1	18.9
Other	6.9	10.0
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(259)	(380)

We have already said that many housewives saw their role as a housewife hindering participation in VTAE programs. It should be noted that this response was made by about one out of every five women

interviewed (19.2 percent). This finding seems to substantiate our earlier comments in which we suggested that housewives are indeed a potential clientele group which did not seem to have been tapped.

We have also noted above that many respondents felt that they were too old to enroll in VTAE programs. Table 3.6 gives a more detailed

TABLE 3.6

Why not consider vocational education
by
respondents age

(Percentages)

Reason for Not Considering Vocational Education	Age				
	18-25	26-35	36-50	51-65	Over 65
Never Thought About It	5.6	5.4	2.2	1.3	5.2
Lack of Time or Money	5.6	10.8	3.9	1.3	5.2
Have Job or Skill	22.2	26.2	39.9	34.9	11.5
In or Went to College	39.8	7.7	11.2	6.0	5.2
No Desire	5.6	14.6	12.4	6.0	4.2
Housewife	14.8	21.5	12.4	8.1	3.1
Know of No Opportunities	1.9	1.4	3.4	2.7	2.1
Too Old	0.0	3.1	7.3	26.8	56.3
Other	5.6	9.2	7.3	12.8	7.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(54)	(130)	(178)	(149)	(96)

picture of this finding. Of the respondents who were in the age group 26 to 35, only a small 3.1 percent felt that they were too old for VTAE. The percentage is also small for those who were from 36 to 50 (7.3 percent). About 50 years of age, however, seems to be something of a breaking point. Over one out of every four of those in the 51 through 65 category felt that they were too old for VTAE. Of those who were over 65 years of age, fully a majority (56.3 percent) felt that they were too old for VTAE. Again, we point out that VTAE has the potential to offer our senior citizens numerous alternatives to complete inactivity throughout the retirement years.

It is also interesting to note that the number of potential VTAE clients may not be as large among the 18 to 25 year old group as might be expected. Indeed, of those in that age group who had not considered vocational education, 62.0 percent indicated that they either already had jobs or skills or, alternatively, were in or had been in college. This means that at most 38.0 percent of this age group are high potential clients for VTAE. Moreover, if housewives are excluded, this figure drops to 23.2 percent.

Finally there are some rather interesting differences in responses when race is held constant. These are shown in Table 3.7. An even 14.0 percent of non-whites indicated simply that they had never thought of enrolling in a vocational program. This figure is substantially higher than for whites (2.4 percent). This finding may well be very important for it seems to indicate that public information efforts

TABLE 3.7

Why not consider vocational education
by
race

(Percentages)

Reason for Not Considering Vocational Education	Race	
	White	Non-White
Never Thought About It	2.4	14.0
Lack of Time or Money	5.0	8.0
Have Job or Skill	29.1	32.0
In or Went to College	12.1	0.0
No Desire	9.9	0.0
Housewife	12.5	0.0
Know of No Opportunities	2.6	0.0
Too Old	19.1	20.0
Other	7.4	26.0
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(691)	(66)

may not be getting through to minority groups as clearly as they do to whites. Also, 8 percent of the non-whites said that they lack time or money while only 5 percent of the whites did so. The particular difference will become clearer in the following pages.

None of those in the non-white group gave college as a reason for not considering VTAE while 12.1 percent of the whites did so. Moreover about one out of ten whites indicated that they had no desire to enroll in VTAE while no non-whites did so. A slightly greater number of non-whites (32.0 percent) than whites (29.1 percent) said that they had a job or skill already. Finally, about 2.6 percent of the whites said that they knew of no opportunities while no non-whites made this response.

More Emphasis on Vocational Education

We turn next to a consideration of the extent to which various kinds of people felt that more emphasis should be put on vocational and technical training than on preparation for a university. Upon reflection, one might guess that those individuals who should find the most potential use for VTAE programs might tend to support greater emphasis on them. Conversely, one might expect those who would conceivably have the least need for VTAE programs to be less concerned with the degree of emphasis put on such programs within the educational system. Generally, these suppositions seem to hold true even though the magnitude of responses is not as great as one might expect.

Table 3.8 shows the relationship between desiring more emphasis on VTAE and race. As we have suggested might be the case, non-whites tend to agree with this proposition more strongly than whites (77.5 percent to 66.5 percent respectively). We hasten to emphasize that this

TABLE 3.8

More emphasis on VTAE
by
race

(Percentages)

	Race	
	White	Non-White
Agree	66.5	77.5
Undecided	14.6	14.6
Disagree	18.9	7.9
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(794)	(89)

relationship is one of degree rather than kind. That is, overall there seems to be a high degree of support for having a greater emphasis on vocational and technical education throughout the population. It is clear, however, that non-whites are more likely to feel this way than are whites.

We next examined the proposition by levels of education. As Table 3.9 shows, the pattern holds once again. Those in the lowest educational category are clearly more likely to desire more emphasis on VTAE (74.4 percent) than are those in the highest educational group (60.5 percent). The point is strengthened when one examines the

TABLE 3.9

More emphasis on VTAE
by
education

(Percentages)

	Education		
	Less Than High School	High School Graduate	More Than High School
Agree	74.4	68.1	60.5
Undecided	16.2	13.3	15.3
Disagree	9.4	18.6	24.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(266)	(301)	(314)

"disagree" categories. Of those who had not completed high school, less than one out of ten (9.4 percent) disagreed. While of those who had completed more than a high school education, about one out of every four (24.2 percent) did so.

Finally, in Table 3.10, we examined responses by levels of income. Here too, the general pattern which we have established seems to hold. Of those in the lowest income category (i.e., a total family income of less than $3,000 per year), 77.1 percent felt that more emphasis should be put on VTAE than on preparation for a university. In the upper income categories, substantially fewer respondents felt this way. Once again,

TABLE 3.10

More emphasis on VTAE
by
income

(Percentages)

	Income				
	Less Than $3,000	$3,001 6,000	$ 6,001 10,000	$10,001 15,000	Over $15,000
Agree	77.1	71.8	60.5	69.8	64.9
Undecided	14.7	16.4	14.9	13.7	9.0
Disagree	8.3	11.9	24.7	16.5	26.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(109)	(177)	(215)	(182)	(111)

the point is bolstered by examination of the disagree category. Only 8.3 percent of the lowest income category disagreed while over one out of every four (26.1 percent) of the highest income category did so.

We are thus forced to conclude that there is somewhat greater support for restructuring the educational system among those of lower social status than among higher status groups. However, it must once again be reemphasized that across all groups there seems to be strong support for the contention that there is too much emphasis on college preparation and not enough on vocational preparation. This seems to speak well for the possibilities of expanding VTAE programs within the educational system.

The Time for Vocational Education

Finally, we turn to one of the most interesting variables contained in this study. It has already been pointed out on several occasions that vocational education enjoys, overall, an exceptionally positive image among Florida residents. We have gone on to suggest, however, that there are exceptions to this generalization. One of these is having the time to enroll in vocational education programs and the other, to be discussed next, is having the money to enroll in vocational education programs.

We submit that these may well be the two most crucial image variables contained in this report. One may agree with all of the other propositions which we have tested, i.e., there should be more emphasis on VTAE; VTAE is as useful as a college degree, etc., but if one feels that programs are either too costly or too time consuming for him, we argue that this may, in fact, override all other considerations. What we are suggesting is that there is an intensity factor here that may not be present in the other items which were contained in this chapter. It may, for example, be rather easy for an individual to respond positively to a statement like "Vocational education helps people get jobs with better pay", simply because a response to this statement requires only a rather abstract conjecture. Time and money, however, are quantities to which people can more easily relate the reality of their own situation. Thus, we cannot overemphasize the important of serious consideration

of the findings presented here in the development of sound and effective public information programs.

Table 3.11 examines responses to the question of having the time to enroll in vocational education programs by age. The age group which ranged from 26 to 35 showed the greatest number (35.3 percent) indicating that most people don't have the time to enroll in vocational education. Across all age groups, however, one-third of the respondents either agreed or were undecided with the statement.

TABLE 3.11

Time for VTAE
by
age

(Percentages)

	Age				
	18-25	26-35	36-50	51-65	Over 65
Agree	29.0	35.3	26.0	26.3	26.9
Undecided	6.5	8.9	9.1	15.5	22.7
Disagree	64.5	55.8	65.0	58.2	50.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(93)	(190)	(254)	(194)	(119)

Examination of the racial breakdown in Table 3.12 provides the first indication of a somewhat more interesting phenomenon. Over two

out of every five non-white respondents interviewed (41.6 percent) agreed that most people don't have the time for VTAE while only slightly over one out of four whites (25.6 percent) did so. Moreover, while six out of ten whites disagreed, only two out of five non-whites did so.

TABLE 3.12

Time for VTAE
by
race

(Percentages)

	Race	
	White	Non-White
Agree	25.6	41.6
Undecided	12.6	15.7
Disagree	61.8	42.7
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(794)	(89)

The pattern is made even clearer in Table 3.13. Here, the responses of various educational groups are examined. As will be seen, among those with less than a high school education, again about two out of five (38.9 percent) agreed. In the highest education group, this

figure is reduced to under one out of five (19.3 percent). Also, there is a clear pattern in the disagree category with higher proportions disagreeing at each successively higher educational level.

TABLE 3.13

Time for VTAE
by
education

(Percentages)

	Education		
	Less Than High School	High School Graduate	More Than High School
Agree	38.9	25.5	19.3
Undecided	15.5	10.4	11.4
Disagree	45.7	64.1	69.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(265)	(298)	(316)

Finally, we turn to differences among income groups. Again, as Table 3.14 shows, the lower the income level, the higher the proportion of respondents who thought that VTAE programs required too much time.

What seems to be occuring here is a rather systematic class bias in perception of the time cost involved in participating in VTAE programs. Those of lower social status, who are, we argue, most likely to

TABLE 3.14

Time for VTAE
by
income

(Percentages)

	Income				
	Less Than $3,000	$3,001 6,000	$6,001 10,000	$10,001 15,000	Over $15,000
Agree	41.3	32.6	30.8	17.0	24.3
Undecided	23.9	14.6	7.9	6.6	9.9
Disagree	34.9	52.8	61.2	76.4	65.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(109)	(178)	(214)	(182)	(111)

benefit from participation in VTAE programs consistently point to the fact that VTAE involves too much time more often than other respondents. This finding could be a function of several kinds of things. For example, it may well be that members of lower social status groups must spend a great deal of their working time making a living and thus, in fact, do not have the time to participate in VTAE programs. We suspect, however, that in many cases the finding is a function of a failure on the part of existing public information programs to communicate effectively with these groups in realistic terms which they can relate to

their own life styles. This argument will be reinforced in the next chapter where it will be shown that, overall, lower social status groups are among the most uninformed in the state with regards to VTAE programs.

Since these groups are potentially the most available clientele groups for VTAE programs, we cannot emphasize too strongly the necessity for extreme sensitivity not only to the extent of public information efforts directed at them, but to the medium through which it is channeled. For example, while "snappy" sixty second spots may be the most effective way to reach middle and upper status individuals, it may well take some new and innovative approaches to public information to reach those who are most desparately in need of basic vocational training and adult education. These kinds of individuals have life styles, cognitive abilities and attitudes which are substantially different from those who enjoy higher social status. Efforts at public information which do not take these things into consideration are bound to be only minimally successful.

The Money for Vocational Education

We now turn to the question of having the money to enroll in vocational education. We expect that our findings here will be similar to those immediately above.

Our first consideration is that of age. Table 3.15 provides these results. A rather surprising finding emerges from examination of this table. It is simply this: with the exception of the 18 to 25 year

TABLE 3.15

Money for VTAE
by
age

(Percentages)

	Age				
	18-25	26-35	36-50	51-65	Over 65
Agree	38.7	32.6	36.2	47.4	54.5
Undecided	7.5	13.7	8.2	10.7	12.4
Disagree	53.8	53.7	55.6	41.8	33.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(93)	(190)	(257)	(196)	(121)

old group, the concern for having the money to enroll in vocational education programs increases with age. Indeed, a majority (54.5 percent) of those over 65 years of age indicated that most people don't have the money to enroll in VTAE programs. We have already mentioned the problem of senior citizens and VTAE. This finding suggests that one clear approach to involving senior citizens in VTAE programs is to point out the limited cost factor involved.

Next, in Table 3.16 we again examined the pattern of responses by race. These results provide one of the strongest relationships contained in this study. It can be put very simply. An overwhelming majority of non-whites (76.4 percent) felt that VTAE costs too much

TABLE 3.16

Money for VTAE
by
race

(Percentages)

	Race	
	White	Non-White
Agree	35.8	76.4
Undecided	12.1	6.7
Disagree	52.1	16.9
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(801)	(89)

money. While about one out of three whites made the same response, a clear majority of the white respondents (52.1 percent) felt that VTAE was not financially out of the reach of most people.

The same kind of clear and strong relationship is shown in Table 3.17 where we examine levels of education. Of those with less

than a high school education, almost two-thirds (63.3 percent) felt that VTAE was too expensive. Among respondents with more than a high school education, about the same number (63.6 percent) felt that it was not too expensive.

TABLE 3.17

Money for VTAE
by
education

(Percentages)

	Education		
	Less Than High School	High School Graduate	More Than High School
Agree	63.3	36.6	23.7
Undecided	7.9	12.5	12.7
Disagree	28.8	50.8	63.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(267)	(303)	(316)

As shown in Table 3.18, occupation presents much the same finding. As one moves from the business and professional workers, the percentage agreeing that VTAE is out of the financial reach of most people constantly increases. Of the manual workers, again a group who could clearly benefit from VTAE programs, an astounding 62.2 percent agreed.

TABLE 3.18

Money for VTAE
by
occupation

(Percentages)

	Business and Professional	White Collar	Blue Collar	Manual Workers	Students	Housewives	Retired
Agree	32.0	26.2	48.3	62.2	30.8	35.5	47.9
Undecided	9.6	11.0	10.3	8.2	7.7	13.4	15.5
Disagree	58.4	62.8	41.4	29.6	61.5	51.2	36.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(125)	(145)	(116)	(98)	(39)	(217)	(142)

Finally, in Table 3.19 the pattern once again holds. Almost three-fourths of the lowest income group felt that VTAE was too expensive while at the other end of the scale, only 13.5 percent of those with incomes over $15,000 agreed.

TABLE 3.19

Money for VTAE
by
income

(Percentages)

	Income				
	Less Than $3,000	$3,001 6,000	$ 6,001 10,000	$10,001 15,000	Over $15,000
Agree	71.8	59.0	34.4	26.4	13.5
Undecided	11.8	7.3	13.5	10.4	10.8
Disagree	16.4	33.7	52.1	63.2	75.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(110)	(178)	(215)	(182)	(111)

The point to be made here is that these findings reaffirm the conclusion that a clear bias exists in the extent to which those in lower social status groups feel that VTAE is within their reach. Although we will have some comments to make about alternative ways of proceeding with public information in the final chapter of this report,

we point out here that in the conceptualization of this study there was no intention of securing data on the question of how one gains access to lower status groups. We do feel, however, that it is imperative that decision makers both remain open to innovative and experimental approaches and that they conduct some rather serious research on the problem before allocating large amounts of money to programs which may or may not render the desired effectiveness.

Summary

This chapter has examined the perceptions of vocational education which are held by Florida residents. By and large, it can safely be said that these images are positive. Certainly, high proportions of people agreed that vocational education helps people get jobs with better pay, that vocational education can be as useful as a college degree and so forth.

Beyond this, however, some rather important relationships have been demonstrated. First, it was shown that groups of lower social status were consistently more likely than higher status groups to desire more emphasis on vocational and technical training than on preparation for a university. We suggested that this speaks well for the possibility of expanding existing VTAE programs within the current educational framework. Second, we demonstrated that there are a couple of rather important exceptions to the generalization that the image of VTAE is highly positive in Florida. Specifically, having time and money to enter VTAE programs were shown to be important considerations for some Florida residents. To a lesser extent in the case of time, and a greater extent in the case of money, these individuals were shown to be residents of lower social status.

CHAPTER IV

LEVELS OF INFORMATION ABOUT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

In addition to assessing the images which respondents had of vocational education, we also attempted to find out how much information they possessed about the content of vocational education advertising, about opportunities for vocational education in the areas where they lived and in Florida generally, and finally, the ability of the respondents to name youth organizations concerned with vocational education. In this chapter, we will probe these informational items in order that we may say something about both the depth and quality of information which the adult population of Florida holds with regard to VTAE.

Specifically, the analysis will focus on the responses to four questions. They are (1) "Do you recall anything that was stressed in this advertising (about vocational education)?"; (2) "Can you tell me what some of the opportunities for vocational education in your area are?"; (3) "Can you tell me what some of the opportunities for vocational education in Florida generally are?"; and (4) "Which vocational youth organizations have you heard of?".

These information variables were considered in relation to several independent variables thought to be especially important here. These included whether or not the respondent had taken part in a vocational education program, where he had seen or heard advertising about

vocational education, sex, age, race, occupation, education, and income. Again, as in the preceding chapter, it is these independent variables which should provide us with a means of more clearly understanding the patterns of responses in these data.

Recall of What Was Stressed in Advertising

It should be noted, as we consider what respondents recalled having been stressed in advertising, that only 228 people said that they had seen or heard advertising about vocational education and were able to recall anything that was stressed in the advertising. This represents only about 28 percent of the full sample. Thus, about 72 percent of the sample are classed *a priori* as not having seen or heard advertising relating to vocational education, not being able to recall the content of that advertising, or both.

With this in mind, it is instructive to consider the relationship between the sources of the respondent's information and what he recalled as being stressed in advertising. It might be expected that individuals who got information from television or radio will recall content which is different from those who got information from newspapers.

Table 4.1 presents these results. The first point to make regarding these figures is that the two predominant sources of information clearly are television and newspapers. Additionally, many people claimed to have gotten information from a combination of sources.

These usually included television and newspapers. Among these two major categories, there are some interesting differences. Newspaper readers were most likely to recall specific vocational schools as being stressed (50.2 percent). Television viewers, however, were much more diversified in their responses. Excluding the "other" response, the modal tendency for television viewers was to say that they recalled training or education

TABLE 4.1

The relation of source of advertising to perceived stress in advertising

(Percentages)

	Television	Radio	Newspaper	Other	Combined
Specific Trades	18.8	28.6	4.5	25.9	12.9
Specific Schools	8.2	14.3	50.0	25.9	12.9
General Mention of Schools	2.4	0.0	1.5	11.1	0.0
Training or Education	21.2	0.0	7.6	7.4	17.9
Government Program	11.8	14.3	1.5	3.7	12.9
Career Advancement	14.1	14.3	10.6	0.0	21.0
Other	23.5	28.6	24.2	25.9	22.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(85)	(7)	(66)	(27)	(62)

as being stressed (21.2 percent). A number, however, reported that they recalled "career advancement" (14.1 percent), "specific trades" (18.8 percent) or "government programs" (11.8 percent). This seems to suggest that among those it reaches, television provides a greater range of images than do other media sources. However, it must be emphasized that there were only 85 people, or slightly over 10 percent of the entire sample, who said that they had seen advertising on television and could recall anything about it.

As is shown in Table 4.2, there are a few sex differences which are worthy of note. In particular, females were much more prone to see

TABLE 4.2

The relation of sex to perceived stress in advertising

(Percentages)

	Male	Female
Specific Trades	6.1	21.8
Specific Schools	29.6	16.5
General Mention of Schools	.9	3.8
Training for Education	13.0	15.8
Government Programs	11.3	6.0
Career Advancement	12.2	14.3
Other	27.0	21.8
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(115)	(133)

specific trades stressed in advertising than were men. Males, on the other hand, recalled specific schools as being stressed proportionately more than women. No other important distinctions arose.

As we expected, racial distinctions were also important (Table 4.3). Blacks were proportionately more likely to say that specific

TABLE 4.3

The relation of race to perceived stress in advertising

(Percentages)

	White	Black
Specific Trades	13.3	26.6
Specific Schools	22.2	26.1
General Mention of School	1.8	8.7
Training or Education	14.7	13.0
Government Program	9.3	0.0
Career Advancement	14.7	0.0
Other	24.0	26.1
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(225)	(23)

trades were being stressed, say that a particular school was being stressed, or give a response classed as "other" than were whites.

As shown in Table 4.4, education was also a variable which was significantly related to what one recalled as having been stressed in advertising. Proportionately, those respondents with less than a high school education were more prone to say specific trades had been stressed in advertising than were high school graduates, or those with greater

TABLE 4.4

The relation of education to perceived stress in advertising

(Percentages)

	Less Than High School	High School	More Than High School
Specific Trades	16.7	15.7	12.7
Specific Schools	31.3	26.5	16.2
General Mention of School	4.2	4.8	0.0
Training or Education	10.4	12.0	17.9
Government Programs	4.2	13.3	6.8
Career Advancement	8.3	13.3	15.4
Other	25.0	14.5	30.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(48)	(83)	(117)

than high school educations. Additionally, the highest education group was distributed all across the various kinds of content. There was also a direct relation between an increase in education and an increase in the perceived stress on training or education in the advertising. High school graduates more often perceived advertising in terms of government programs than did either the less than high school group or the more than high school group.

Although the "no response" category has been excluded for purposes of presentation, we should point out that there was a strong inverse relation between giving no response and educational attainment. That is, an increase in education led to a decrease in the proportion of responses classed as "no", "nothing", etc. Thus, it appears that those at lower levels of educational attainment clearly have more difficulty recalling what was stressed in VTAE related advertising.

Some interesting comments can also be made about the relationship of occupation to the perceived stress of advertising which is displayed in Table 4.5. Housewives were the group which proportionately saw specific trades as being most often perceived. The crafts group saw specific schools as being stressed most often. Students were the most likely group to recall training or governmental programs as being stressed. The retired group were those that most often fell into the "no response" category.

TABLE 4.5

The relation of occupation to perceived stress in advertising

(Percentages)

	Professional	White Collar	Blue Collar	Service and Labor	Students	Housewives	Retired	Other
Specific Trades	11.4	0.0	6.1	17.9	14.3	29.0	13.0	0.0
Specific Schools	20.5	29.7	42.4	21.4	0.0	14.5	24.1	0.0
General Mention of School	2.3	0.0	3.0	7.1	0.0	3.2	0.0	0.0
Training or Education	18.2	16.2	0.0	14.3	42.9	11.3	13.8	100.0
Government Programs	4.5	10.8	21.2	0.0	21.4	4.8	6.9	0.0
Career Advancement	13.6	18.9	15.2	3.6	7.1	21.0	0.0	0.0
Other	29.5	24.3	21.1	35.7	14.3	16.1	41.4	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(84)	(37)	(33)	(26)	(14)	(62)	(29)	(1)

The final variable which we will consider here is income. As demonstrated in Table 4.6, we found that the less than $3,000 income group was proportionately the most likely to perceive a stress on

TABLE 4.6

The relation of income to perceived stress in advertising

(Percentages)

	Less Than $3,000	$3,001 6,000	$ 6,001 10,000	$10,001 15,000	More Than $15,000
Specific Trades	35.0	12.2	18.3	8.7	8.8
Specific Schools	15.0	34.7	23.3	23.2	2.9
General Mention of School	10.0	0.0	1.7	0.0	8.8
Training or Education	25.0	8.2	11.7	15.9	26.5
Government Programs	0.0	10.2	3.3	13.0	5.9
Career Advancement	0.0	2.0	21.7	23.2	5.9
Other	15.0	32.7	20.0	15.9	41.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(20)	(49)	(60)	(69)	(34)

specific trades in the advertising. A number of those in this low income bracket (25.0 percent) also recalled training and education as being stressed, as did 26.5 percent of the over $15,000 group. The two groups of $6,000 to $10,000 and $10,000 to $15,000 were most likely to see a stress on personal achievement or career advancement. Again, we can note that an increase in a socio-economic status variable, income, is inversely related to a "no", "nothing", or no response.

Opportunities for Vocational Education Where You Live

This variable and the next to be considered give us a clue to knowledge of the breath of VTAE programs both in the respondent's home area and the state as a whole. It must be recalled, however, throughout this section that the majority of the population is uninformed as to specific vocational opportunities. Indeed, only 386 persons or 43.2 percent of the sample were able to give a response when they were asked to name some specific opportunities for vocational education in their area. In reality, even this figure is high. Of the 386 respondents who gave some answer to the question, 112 were able only to give some kind of program (i.e., "You can learn to be a mechanic.") without any reference as to where or how one might do so. Overall, then, only about 30.7 percent of the entire population is even minimally informed about vocational opportunities in their home area.

We first considered whether the respondent or any member of his family had taken part in an occupational training program (Table 4.7). We had assumed that those who had, either personally or through their families, experienced a training program of some kind might be more aware of vocational opportunities than those who had not. As Table 4.7

TABLE 4.7

The relation of participation in a vocational program to knowledge of local programs

(Percentages)

	Yes	No
Mention of One Center	39.0	48.0
Mention of Two Centers	19.0	15.7
Mention of Three Centers	12.4	3.9
Mention of Four or More Centers	0.0	3.6
Mention of Program Only	29.5	28.8
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(105)	(281)

demonstrates, this does not appear to hold in any systematic way. For example, it is true that 12.4 percent of those with training were able to name three training centers and only 3.9 percent of those without training

were able to do so. But it is also true that 3.6 percent of those without training were able to mention four or more centers while none of those with training were able to do so.

Some rather interesting distinctions arose when age was considered (Table 4.8). Generally speaking, it seems clear that older individuals

TABLE 4.8

The relation of age to knowledge of local programs

(Percentages)

	18-25	26-35	36-50	51-65	Over 65
Mention of One Center	48.2	37.5	44.7	48.1	58.1
Mention of Two Centers	17.9	26.2	15.9	12.7	6.5
Mention of Three Centers	3.6	6.3	8.3	7.6	0.0
Mention of Four or More Centers	7.1	2.5	3.0	0.0	0.0
Mention of Program Only	23.2	27.5	28.0	31.6	35.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(56)	(80)	(132)	(79)	(31)

were less frequently informed than the younger people. Indeed, of those over 65, not one mentioned more than two training centers and more than one out of every three mentioned only programs.

Race too seems to play a role in how informed Florida residents are as is shown in Table 4.9. Non-whites tended to either mention only one center (57.7 percent) or to mention just a program (34.6 percent).

TABLE 4.9

The relation of race to knowledge of local programs

(Percentages)

	White	Black
Mention of One Center	44.4	57.7
Mention of Two Centers	17.3	7.7
Mention of Three Centers	6.7	0.0
Mention of Four or More Centers	2.8	0.0
Mention of Program Only	28.8	34.6
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(358)	(26)

Only 7 percent of the non-whites were able to mention two centers. Additionally, it must be pointed out that only 26 non-whites are considered here. The remainder of the non-whites in the sample were either totally uninformed or were able to give no response at all to the question.

Likewise, education sheds light on who is and who is not informed. These results are shown in Table 4.10. Those with more than a high

TABLE 4.10

The relation of education to knowledge of local programs

(Percentages)

	Less Than High School	High School	More Than High School
Mention of One Center	64.1	42.8	38.1
Mention of Two Centers	7.6	13.8	24.5
Mention of Three Centers	1.1	5.1	10.3
Mention of Four or More Centers	0.0	2.2	4.5
Mention of Program Only	27.2	36.2	22.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(92)	(138)	(155)

school education were likely to be able to mention several training centers. Almost two-thirds (64.1 percent) of those with less than a high school education, however, were able to mention only one such center. Thus, again we find that those who might best gain from information about vocational education seem to be most sorely lacking.

The same pattern prevailed when occupation was examined, as Table 4.11 shows. The proportion of respondents who were able to mention more than one training center steadily decreases as we proceed down the occupational ladder. As can be seen, those in the lowest status jobs (service workers and laborers) were clearly unable to mention more than one center.

Opportunities for Vocational Education in Florida

Now we move to the broader question of what knowledge exists about vocational opportunities in Florida generally. As we noted in Chapter I, the indications are that information is even lower in regard to the whole state than to the area in which the respondent lived. In fact, only 24 percent of those who said that there were opportunities in Florida were able to give any response at all to the question of what those opportunities might be. Moreover, about half of those who attempted to tell us what some opportunities might be, were able only to name a program with no other references.

Among those who did respond, however, patterns were much like those for the home areas. That is, those in lower status groups tended to be less informed than those in higher status groups. Shown in Table 4.12 are the responses of various educational groups. As in the previous section, those with higher educational backgrounds were much more likely to mention several training centers than were those of lower educational status.

TABLE 4.11

The relation of occupation to knowledge of local programs

(Percentages)

	Professional	White Collar	Blue Collar	Service and Labor	Students	Housewives	Retired	Other
Mention of One Center	31.3	44.9	50.0	67.6	58.3	41.1	48.6	100.0
Mention of Two Centers	29.9	16.7	14.0	0.0	16.7	16.7	8.6	0.0
Mention of Three Centers	10.4	11.5	8.0	0.0	4.2	3.3	0.0	0.0
Mention of Four or More Centers	4.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	3.3	5.7	0.0
Mention of Program Only	23.9	26.9	28.0	32.4	12.5	35.6	37.1	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(67)	(78)	(50)	(37)	(24)	(90)	(35)	(3)

TABLE 4.12

The relation of education to knowledge of state-wide programs

(Percentages)

	Less Than High School	High School	More Than High School
Mention of One Center	22.9	29.7	25.8
Mention of Two Centers	2.9	13.2	10.1
Mention of Three Centers	0.0	0.0	5.6
Mention of Four or More Centers	0.0	0.0	3.4
Mention of Program Only	74.3	57.1	55.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(35)	(91)	(89)

Examination of income groups, in Table 4.13, greatly strengthens this conclusion. Of those in the lowest income bracket, only 26.7 percent were able to mention one center and the remainder, 73.3 percent, could say only that various programs existed. Generally, as income increased, more and more respondents were able to mention two, three or even four centers. Once again, lower status individuals have the least information.

TABLE 4.13

The relation of income to knowledge of state-wide programs

(Percentages)

	Less Than $3,000	$3,001 6,000	$ 6,001 10,000	$10,001 15,000	More Than $15,000
Mention of One Center	26.7	29.4	32.8	20.4	22.2
Mention of Two Centers	0.0	5.9	12.1	8.2	13.9
Mention of Three Centers	0.0	2.9	0.0	4.1	5.6
Mention of Four or More Centers	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3
Mention of Program Only	73.3	61.8	55.2	67.3	50.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(15)	(34)	(58)	(49)	(36)

Vocational Youth Organizations

Examination of respondent's abilities to name vocational youth organizations presents much the same picture as the other information items presented here. Only about 30.7 percent of the entire sample both claimed to have heard of youth organizations and could make any response when asked to name some. Moreover, 46.3 percent of those who attempted

to name a vocational youth organization did so incorrectly, leaving only 16.4 percent of the total sample who said they had heard of the youth organizations and were correctly able to name at least one.

We examined the respondents who attempted to name some vocational youth organizations by race, education, and income. Race is shown in Table 4.14. As we have come to expect, more whites were able to more

TABLE 4.14

The relation of race to identification of vocational youth groups

(Percentages)

	White	Black
One Group Mentioned	46.4	17.9
Two Groups Mentioned	7.7	10.7
Three Groups Mentioned	2.0	0.0
Four or More Groups Mentioned	0.4	0.0
No Correct Response	43.5	71.4
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(248)	(28)

accurately name youth organizations than were non-whites. Almost three quarters of the non-whites (71.4 percent) who made the attempt were unable to correctly name any youth organization. This contrasts with 43.5 percent of whites. Moreover, 56.5 percent of the whites were able to correctly name at least one youth group while only 28.0 percent of the non-whites were able to do so.

Education, again, presents the same picture (Table 4.15). In the lowest educational group, 58.2 percent of the respondents incorrectly

TABLE 4.15

The relation of education to identification of vocational youth groups

(Percentages)

	Less Than High School	High School	More Than High School
One Group Mentioned	27.3	43.7	50.4
Two Groups Mentioned	12.7	5.8	7.7
Three Groups Mentioned	0.0	1.9	2.6
Four or More Groups Mentioned	1.8	0.0	0.0
No Correct Response	58.2	48.5	39.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(55)	(103)	(117)

named a youth organization while in the highest educational group only 39.3 percent did so. Further, significantly more of the highest educational group was able to correctly name at least one group.

Finally, the point is driven home by the consideration of income (Table 4.16). Of the lowest income group, an overwhelming 80 percent of the respondents gave an incorrect response in an effort to name a vocational youth organization. In the highest income group, only 29.4 percent did so. Nothing more need be said.

TABLE 4.16

The relation of income to identification of vocational youth groups

(Percentages)

	Less Than $3,000	$3,001 6,000	$ 6,001 10,000	$10,001 15,000	More Than $15,000
One Group Mentioned	20.0	26.7	43.0	51.3	61.8
Two Groups Mentioned	0.0	15.6	8.9	7.9	5.9
Three Groups Mentioned	0.0	0.0	2.5	2.6	2.9
Four or More Groups Mentioned	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
No Correct Response	80.0	55.6	45.6	38.2	29.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(15)	(45)	(79)	(76)	(34)

Summary and Conclusions

These data are fairly easy to summarize. Basically, it is abundantly clear that the general adult population in Florida has not acquired a base of knowledge about vocational education. It was true on every variable analyzed in this section that far more than a majority of our sample failed to pass even the most basic tests regarding information about vocational education.

We said in the last chapter that a class bias seemed to exist in the consideration of having both the time and the money to enroll in a VTAE program. That fact is even clearer with respect to information. It has been dramatically shown over and over again that those in lower status groups have significantly less information about VTAE programs. Moreover, it was shown in the early pages of this chapter that these are precisely the same individuals who are least able to recall advertising information relating to VTAE.

We cannot emphasize this point strongly enough. If the goal of existing public information programs has been to gain access to those groups who are, in an objective sense, most likely to benefit from VTAE programs, they have simply not done the job. New and innovative approaches must be taken. If VTAE services are to be expanded in Florida, these lower social status groups must be reached, if the reader will pardon the colloquism, where they live. Information must be aimed directly at the life styles, attitudes and educational levels of these individuals.

Moreover, serious attention must be given to the medium through which information is channeled. It may well be that sophisticated advertising techniques channeled through television creates a "but it's not for me" attitude among those of lower social status. Whatever the final approach, we can only point to the fact that these data are clear and the need for new approaches is evident.

CHAPTER V

THE INTERACTION OF INFORMATION AND PERCEPTION

In the two previous chapters, we have extensively examined and analyzed the perceptions of our adult sample with respect to vocational education and our respondents base of information about vocational education. For the former, we were particularly concerned with a set of statements with which the respondents were asked to agree or disagree. When we turned to assess information, we choose to look at a series of items which were related to the breadth and depth of an individual's information about vocational education.

It is clearly important, however, to assess the interaction of information and perceptions. We want to make some preliminary and tentative evaluations of just how our respondents came to hold the perceptions they have acquired by one means or another. Our initial belief was that advertising would have precious little to do with the kinds of images held by the adult population for at least three reasons. First, because of the great diversity of potential sources of information. Second, because of the peripheral place of vocational education to most of the adult population. Finally, because of the inability of most media advertising to give more than a fleeting impression or idea which cannot be absorbed as a part of an individual's cognitive structure from which he makes the basic decisions of his life.

Data Description

By and large, the foregoing supposition was correct, i.e., only a fraction of the primary relations proved to be significant. The first of these basic interactive relations we will consider involves identification of some vocational education opportunities in the local area, and "High schools and junior colleges should put more emphasis on job training and technical education than on preparation for a university." (Table 5.1) There was no clear relationship between these "image" and

TABLE 5.1

The relation between knowledge about local vocational opportunities and more emphasis on VTAE

(Percentages)

	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Total	(N)
Mention of One Center	65.9	15.3	18.8	100.0	(176)
Mention of Two Centers	54.7	14.1	31.3	100.0	(64)
Mention of Three Centers	45.8	29.2	25.0	100.0	(24)
Mention of Four or More Centers	50.0	40.0	10.0	100.0	(10)
No Correct Response	73.9	12.6	13.5	100.0	(111)
Total					(385)

"information" items. That is, whatever one recalled in advertising, he was most likely to agree with more emphasis on VTAE.

The second relationship of significance is the one between identification of vocational youth organizations, and "High schools and junior colleges should put more emphasis on job training and technical education than on preparation for a university" (Table 5.2). Again, we find no relationship between information and image. Whether one was able to make

TABLE 5.2

The relation between knowledge about vocational youth organizations and more emphasis on VTAE

(Percentages)

	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Total	(N)
Mention of One Group	55.8	17.5	26.7	100.0	(120)
Mention of Two Groups	50.0	13.6	36.4	100.0	(22)
Mention of Three or More Groups	16.7	50.0	33.3	100.0	(6)
No Correct Response	69.8	15.9	14.3	100.0	(126)
Total					(274)

no correct response, or whether he made one correct response, the best guess was that he agreed with more emphasis on VTAE. The single

exception is that those who mentioned three or more groups correctly. Here 50.0 percent responded undecided to the idea of more emphasis on VTAE.

The last relationship to be discussed is between the number of correct mentions of high school youth organizations and "Vocational education can be just as useful to me or my children as a college degree" (Table 5.3). Here too, no relationship is found between image and information. We should note in passing that tables were analyzed for

TABLE 5.3

The relation between knowledge about vocational youth organizations and whether VTAE can be as useful as a college degree

(Percentages)

	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Total	(N)
Mention of One Group	68.3	11.7	20.0	100.0	(120)
Mention of Two Groups	59.1	4.5	36.4	100.0	(22)
Mention of Three or More Groups	66.7	33.3	0.0	100.0	(6)
Program Mention Only	75.8	14.1	10.2	100.0	(128)
Total					(276)

each information item against each image item. Consistently, the same pattern is presented. There is no relationship between image and information.

Discussion

The most important thing we have had to say in this brief chapter is that by and large, personal evaluations of vocational education are made regardless of the information level of the individual. It may, at first seem astonishing that most of an adult sample of the state of Florida would assess a government program such as VTAE on the basis of scanty and mostly incomplete information, but, as a matter of fact, this seems to be a characteristic of much of public opinion. This is a crucial finding. If information is unrelated to perception, then efforts aimed at improving the general image of vocational education, which is already positive, will have little effect on changing the depth of content of an individual's knowledge of what vocational education is and what it can do for him. This leads one to suspect that the television campaign now being undertaken by VTAE on behalf of the Success program may encounter some difficulty in effecting both the amount of information held by the adult population of Florida and the general image of vocational education.

We believe that the almost inescapable conclusion to be reached here is that image oriented media work will miss the boat, so to speak, in terms of disseminating basic information about vocational education.

We have already noted that the image of vocational education is moderately favorable. Nonetheless, that image is vague and lacking in depth. Additionally, the kind of information held by our respondents was also very "soft" and diverse. Basically, there was little content of note in this information base. Again, we come back to the same conclusion reached above: that more attention to potential client groups may well be a better means of conveying hard information to prospective students in vocational programs than a mass media oriented, image type campaign. Identification of these target groups may not be a particularly difficult task in relative terms. Defining the information that should be conveyed and the manner in which it should be conveyed is another story. We suspect that traditional public relations techniques may have a minimal impact with some of the population groups which may well be VTAE's best targets as potential students.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Before proceeding with the conclusions which can be drawn from these data, a single caveat is in order. Simply put, we must emphasize that a cursory reading of these conclusions is in no way intended to supplant an understanding of the entire report. Social research deals with probabilities rather than precise facts. Thus, it must be clearly understood that these conclusions represent dominant tendancies and not straightforward functional relationships. The extent to which this is true, again, can only be fully realized through a full examination of the findings within the context within which they are presented.

Chapter I presented an overview of all questions contained in the study. From this overview, some preliminary findings emerged which were given credence throughout the report. They were,

(1) The overall image of vocational education was found to be quite positive in Florida.

(2) Levels of information about vocational education in Florida were found to be very low.

(3) A great deal of reticence was found in regard to participation in VTAE programs, notably among older citizens and housewives. It was suggested that these represent potential clientele groups which are not being reached by current public information efforts.

Chapter II examined the question of whether any differences existed between the five administrative districts of VTAE in Florida. It was found that,

(4) Few significant differences existed between the districts. Where differences did exist, they tended to be small, and in a substantive sense, meaningless.

Chapter III provided a detailed analysis of perceptions about VTAE here in Florida. Several interesting findings emerged from this chapter.

(5) When asked to define what the term vocational education brought to mind, individuals of higher social status tended to respond in concrete terms and say that it brought either specific skills, training or education to mind. Lower status individuals, however, tended to say that vocational education was

"something good". We suggested that this positive response may have been a general positive reaction to education rather than a true evaluation of VTAE based on meaningful information.

(6) Lower status individuals were found to a greater extent than higher status individuals, to support the contention that "High schools and junior colleges should put more emphasis on vocational and technical education than on preparation for a university."

(7) Many people agreed that "Most people don't have the time to enroll in vocational education program." This tendency was more pronounced among lower status groups than higher status groups.

(8) Many respondents agreed that "Most people don't have the money to enroll in vocational education programs." This tendency was clearly more pronounced among groups of lower social status.

Chapter IV examined levels of information about vocational education in Florida. Two clear findings emerged.

(9) Levels of specific information about vocational education in Florida are dismally low.

(10) Levels of information are even lower, by a significant margin, among those of lower social status.

Finally, Chapter V probed the relationship between levels of information about and images of VTAE. Specifically, the question was raised as to whether those with higher levels of information would have more positive images of VTAE. It was found that,

(11) Levels of information were totally unrelated, in any systematic way, to images of VTAE.

Recommendations

Although the data presented in this report do not point to any specific methods of employing various media to reach the public, the following limited recommendations are made for further study and implementation under controlled testing.

We argue that the primary consideration for effective public information programs is that of identifying "potential clientele groups" or, in other words, "relevant publics." It is specifically these groups to which information must be directed. Several identifiable groups have emerged from this study. They are,

1. Those with low incomes
2. Those with less than a high school education
3. Service and manual workers and, to a lesser extent, blue collar workers
4. Non-whites
5. Housewives
6. Senior citizens

There will be, of course, other groups which may be identifiable such as college dropouts or veterans, for example, that were not considered in this study. The primary point to remember, however, is that each of the potential clientele groups identified not only may require extreme sensitivity to the content of information directed to them, but also to the medium through which it is channeled. For example, consider the case of the elementary or secondary school dropout who makes less than $3,000 per year. Clearly, here is an individual who could greatly benefit from participation in some kind of VTAE programs. It is also clear that this kind of individual is more apt than others to be out of touch with the mainstream of American life. His lifestyle, attitudes and levels of awareness are systematically different from those of differing social status. Thus, the medium through which information is channeled to him may also have to be systematically different than for those of a different social status. It may be, to carry the example further, that our hypothetical man must be reached on the street corner

rather than through television or printed media. Moreover, the information which is directed to him must be directly relevant to the life experience with which he is familiar.

This same example, of course, extends directly to each of the groups which we have mentioned. The point is, that once potential clientele groups are identified, they must be reached within the context of the social environment in which they live.

APPENDIX A

THE SAMPLE DESIGN

1. The Sample Design

The sample was a representative cross-section of adults (ages 18 and over) from households having a listing in a current telephone directory. Each residential telephone in each of the five districts had an equal probability of selection. In order that we could obtain at least 100 interviews in each district, Districts I, II and III were sampled at twice the rate of Districts IV and V.

A multi-stage design was used. In the initial stage, a systematic sample of telephone pages was selected in each of the five districts. The telephone pages in each district were listed for selection in an order which automatically stratified the towns, cities, etc., both by percentage urban population and by percentage non-white. A sample of printing spaces was then selected from the sample pages. Telephone numbers having the first line of their listing contained in the selected printing space came into the sample. In the final stage of sampling, a respondent was selected randomly from among adults in the household with an objective procedure developed by Leslie Kish.

Probability sampling was strictly employed throughout the selection procedure. At each stage of selection, each sampling unit had a known probability of selection. Specifically, the probability of selecting a currently listed telephone number was equal to the probability of selecting the i^{th} page times the probability of selecting the j^{th} printing line.

2. Characteristics of Incomplete Interviews

In order that at least 100 interviews would be completed in each district, we oversampled each district by approximately fifty percent. In all over 1200 telephone numbers were selected for contact. Of these, 630 interviews were complete and usable. To create an unbiased sample of the entire state, District IV and V were weighed by a factor of 2, giving a weighted N of 898. The non-completion rates and the reasons for non-completion are shown in the tables below.

DISTRICT I

Reason Incomplete	Percentage of Total Interviews
Non-resident	7.8
Business Telephone	11.5
Phone Out of Service	7.8
Rings but no Answer (over five calls)	5.7
Unable to Contact Correct Respondent	3.6
Refused	8.4
Other	1.5
Total Non-completion Rate	46.3

DISTRICT II

Reason Incomplete	Percentage of Total Interviews
Non-resident	5.5
Business Telephone	4.3
Phone Out of Service	7.3
Rings but no Answer (over five calls)	4.7
Unable to Contact Correct Respondent	9.0
Refused	12.4
Other	.4
Total Non-completion Rate	43.6

DISTRICT III

Reason Incomplete	Percentage of Total Interviews
Non-resident	2.5
Business Telephon	5.4
Phone Out of Service	15.5
Rings but no Answer (over five calls)	3.6
Unable to Contact Correct Respondent	7.2
Refused	14.1
Other	5.1
Total Non-completion Rate	53.4

DISTRICT IV

Reason Incomplete	Percentage of Total Interviews
Non-resident	6.9
Business Telephone	3.8
Phone Out of Service	5.7
Rings but no Answer (over five calls)	10.5
Unable to Contact Correct Respondent	9.2
Refused	20.3
Other	2.8
Total Non-completion Rate	59.4

DISTRICT V

Reason Incomplete	Percentage of Total Interviews
Non-resident	10.6
Business Telephone	2.0
Phone Out of Service	9.8
Rings but no Answer	7.3
Unable to Contact Correct Respondent	10.3
Refused	20.2
Other	4.0
Total Non-completion Rate	64.2

APPENDIX B

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

2. Have you or any other member of your family ever taken part in an occupational training program?

0 - Don't know ( ) To question 3
1 - Yes ( )
2 - No ( ) Go to question 3

2a. What kind of training was that? (Get specific programs if possible)

_____

01 - Junior College program
02 - VTAE program other than Junior College
03 - On the job training, apprenticeship, etc., don't know field
04 - Training in a specific field
05 - Training of some other kind
06 - No response, refused, etc.
07 - Not applicable

3. Generally speaking, what comes to your mind when you think of vocational education? (Probe for specifics here)

_____

_____

01 - Specific trades or skills
02 - Training in general; education in general
03 - State and local government training programs
04 - Federal training programs
05 - Government training programs--don't know whether Federal or State or Local
06 - Specific vocational schools
07 - General positive reaction
08 - General negative reaction
09 - Takes place of college
10 - High school programs
11 - General reference to work
12 - Private school or training including on the job training
13 - Other
14 - Nothing, no response, don't know, etc.

4. Have you seen or heard any advertising about vocational education here in Florida?

0 - Dont' know ( ) Go to question 5
1 - Yes ( )
2 - No ( ) Go to question 5

4a. Where did you see or hear this advertising?

0 - Don't know ( )
1 - Television ( )
2 - Radio ( )
3 - Newspaper ( )
4 - Billboard ( )
5 - Other _____
6 - Not applicable
7 - Combination of media

4b. Do you recall anything that was stressed in this advertising?

01 - Recalled specific trade as being stressed
02 - Recalled specific vocational education school as being stressed
03 - General mention of school as being stressed
04 - Recalled that training or education was stressed, dropouts or others
05 - Recalled that government programs were stressed
06 - Recalled that career or personal advancement were stressed
07 - Other
08 - No, nothing, no response, etc.
09 - Not applicable

5. Have you ever heard of a group or organization called Success?

0 - Don't remember ( ) To question 6
1 - Yes ( )
2 - No ( ) Skip to question 6

5a. Where did you hear about it?

0 - Dont' know ( )
1 - Television ( )
2 - Radio ( )
3 - Newspaper ( )
4 - Billboard ( )
5 - Other_____

5b. Do you recall what this group does?_____

_____

_____

6. Are there any opportunities for vocational education in the area where you live?

0 - Don't know ( ) To question 7
1 - Yes ( )
2 - No ( ) To question 7

6a. Can you tell me what some of them are?_____

_____

_____

01 - Mention of one training center
02 - Mention of two training centers
03 - Mention of three training centers
04 - Mention of four or more training centers
97 - Mention of programs--don't know where
98 - No response, don't know, refused, etc.

7. How about Florida in general, would you say that there are very many opportunities for vocational education here?

0 - Don't know ( ) To question 8
1 - Yes ( )
2 - No ( ) Go to question 8

7a. Can you tell me what some of them are?_____

_____

01 - Mention of one training center
02 - Mention of two training centers
03 - Mention of three training centers
04 - Mention of four or more training centers
97 - Mention of programs--don't know where
98 - No response, don't know, refused, etc.

8. Have you ever personally considered entering some kind of vocational program?

0 - Don't know--No answer ( ) To question 9
1 - Yes ( )
2 - No ( )

8a. Could you tell me why you have considered a vocational education program?

01 - To acquire or improve skills
02 - General improvement of self
03 - General improvement of job or pay opportunities
04 - Just interested, no particular reason
05 - Finish school or get more education
06 - Other
07 - Not applicable (No to 8)

8b. Could you tell me why you have not considered a vocational education program?

01 - Never thought about it
02 - Lack of time or money
03 - Have a job or skill already
04 - In college or went to college
05 - Generally felt no desire or need
06 - Housewife
07 - Knows of no opportunities in the area
08 - Feels is too old
09 - Other
10 - Not applicable
99 - No response (Not included in tabular report)

9. Would you say that vocational education programs are for young people only, adults only, or for both?

0 - Don't know ( )
1 - Young only ( )
2 - Adults only ( )
3 - Both ( )

10. Can people in vocational education programs go to college?

0 - Don't know ( )
1 - Yes ( )
2 - No ( )

11. Have you ever heard of any vocational youth organizations for high school students for example?

0 - Don't know ( ) To question 12
1 - Yes ( )
2 - No ( )

11a. Which ones?_____

01 - Named one organization correctly
02 - Named two organizations correctly
03 - Named three or more organizations correctly
97 - No correct response
98 - No response

NOW I HAVE SOME STATEMENTS THAT PEOPLE SOMETIMES MAKE ABOUT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION. I'D LIKE YOU TO TELL ME WHETHER YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THEM.

12. High schools and junior colleges should put more emphasis on job training and technical education than on preparation for a university.

0 - No answer ( )
1 - Agree ( )
2 - Undecided or don't know ( )
3 - Disagree ( )

13. Most people don't have the time to enroll in vocational education programs.

0 - No answer ( )
1 - Agree ( )
2 - Undecided or don't know ( )
3 - Disagree ( )

14. Most people don't have the money to enroll in vocational education programs.

0 - No answer ( )
1 - Agree ( )
2 - Undecided or don't know ( )
3 - Disagree

15. Vocational education can be just as useful to me or my children as a college degree.

0 - No answer ( )
1 - Agree ( )
2 - Undecided or don't know ( )
3 - Disagree ( )

16. Having vocational training does not really improve chances for job success.

0 - No answer ( )
1 - Agree ( )
2 - Undecided or don't know ( )
3 - Disagree ( )

17. Vocational education helps people get jobs with better pay.

0 - No answer ( )
1 - Agree ( )
2 - Undecided or don't know ( )
3 - Disagree ( )

18. After people get to be middle aged, enrolling in some vocational or job training program is simply out of the question.

0 - No answer ( )
1 - Agree ( )
2 - Undecided or don't know ( )
3 - Disagree

19. We have been asking you questions about job training programs. Some people call these Vocational Education, some call them Occupational Education, and some call them Career Education. Which would you prefer to call them?

0 - No response ( )
1 - Vocational Education ( )
2 - Occupational Education ( )
3 - Career Education ( )
4 - Don't know ( )

AND FINALLY, I HAVE TO CHECK A FEW ITEMS THAT HELP US CLASSIFY VARIOUS GROUPS OF PEOPLE.

20. Is there a TV set in your house?

0 - No response ( )
1 - Yes ( )
2 - No ( )

21. Your sex is . . .

0 - Refused ( )
1 - Male ( )
2 - Female ( )

22. And your age . . .

(Write in)_____
00 - Refused ( )

23. Your race?

0 - Refused ( )
1 - White ( )
2 - Black ( )
3 - Other ( )

24. What is the last grade of school you completed?

(Write in)_____
00 - Refused ( )

25. And your occupation?

(Write in)_____
00 - Refused ( )

26. And finally is your family income

0 - Refused
1 - Less than $3,000 ( )
2 - Between $3,000 and $6,000 ( )
3 - Between $6,000 and $10,000 ( )
4 - Between $10,000 and $15,000 ( )
5 - Over $15,000 ( )